

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

April 28, 2021

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Chairwoman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and  
Human Services and Education  
Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and  
Human Services and Education  
Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole:

We are writing to respectfully request robust funding for the *Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act* (Perkins) in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill. We urge you to consider the positive impact that Perkins Act funding has on millions of career and technical education (CTE) students across the United States, as well as its value to the business community, which relies on these programs for a skilled workforce.

We are grateful that Perkins state grants were funded at \$1.335 billion in FY21, an increase of \$52 million over the FY20 level. However, adjusted for inflation, FY21 levels were still lower than they were fifteen years ago, despite the fact that more than 12 million CTE students rely on this funding at the secondary and postsecondary level.

The House Education and Labor Committee has long recognized the importance of strong independent Perkins funding. In the 113th Congress, Perkins was intentionally exempted from efforts to consolidate program funding under the bipartisan *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act*. In 2015, CTE programs were explicitly left out of the *Every Student Succeeds Act* in recognition of the importance of direct and targeted investment in CTE. Furthermore, Congress recently recognized CTE as an effective workforce development strategy when it passed H.R. 2353, the *Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act*, reauthorizing the Perkins Act in July 2018 (Public Law No. 115-224).

In the past decades, the American economy has undergone a dramatic series of transformations, most recently due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Employers of all sizes are increasingly seeking individuals with specialized skills and career competencies in order to thrive in a rapidly evolving job market. Moreover, this new American economy is demanding higher levels of foundational skills from its workers, including creativity and innovation, the ability to think critically and solve complex problems, and collaborative work skills. These requirements cut across every occupation and industry sector and are now a prerequisite for worker success.

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Put simply, jobs in our economy are changing and our education and training systems must keep pace if America wants to recover from the current economic devastation and remain competitive on the world stage. A commitment to high-quality CTE is key to meeting this challenge and is central to rebuilding the American economy and empowering every American worker.

We are hopeful your Subcommittee will continue this bipartisan commitment to Perkins in FY22. As CTE programs evolve to meet the needs of employers in high-wage, high-skill, or in-demand career fields, such as skilled trades and information technology, which have hundreds of thousands of open positions across the country, we must provide strong federal support for these programs.

CTE ensures that students have the academic, technical, and employability skills necessary for true college and career readiness, and Perkins funding is key to their continued success. Therefore, we respectfully urge your strong support for the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act in FY22. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



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James R. Langevin  
Member of Congress



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Glenn "GT" Thompson  
Member of Congress

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Member of Congress

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